ranging from Rs. 5 to Rs. 20 per quintal for different Kharif Crops of 2002-03 season.

(c) and (d) The Special Drought Relief Prices are over and above the Minimum Support Prices fixed for Kharif Crops of 2002-03 season. The Special Drought Relief Prices are payable to farmers offering their produce to the public and cooperative agencies entrusted with procurement operation for various agricultural commodities.

Cost of agricultural goods

354. SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the prices of agricultural goods have been declining while the cost of agricultural production is rising day by day;

(b) whether cheaper agricultural goods have been flooding the country after lifting of quantitative ban on import by Government;

(c) if so, what steps Government propose to take in order to improve the conditions of farmers; and

(d) whether there is any proposal to increase the plan outlay on agriculture in order to complete the pending agricultural schemes in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) to (c) Cost of production of agricultural crops depends on cost of cultivation and productivity. Though there were fluctuations in the terms of trade between agricultural and non-ajgricultural sectors, the index continued to remain favourable to the agricultural sector during 1991 -92 to 2000-01. The proportion of import of agricultural commodities in total national imports increased from 3.1 per cent in 1991-92 to 8.2 per cent in 1998-99 but declined to 6.7 per cent by 2001-02.

(d) The Tenth Plan outlay for the Department of Agriculture and Cooperation is Rs.13,200 crores compared with the Ninth Plan outlay of Rs. 9154 crores.